

Reading Toolkit: Grade 8 Objective 2.A.2.d

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 2. Analyze text features to facilitate and extend understanding of informational texts

Objective d. Analyze organizational aids that contribute to meaning

Assessment Limits:

All organizational aids

All organizational aids

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Lesson Seeds

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Activities

- The teacher will place students in small groups or teams. Provide teams with a packet of passages from various informational texts. Around the room display a series of subheadings that might precede the informational passages in the packets. Student teams must read the passages, locate the correct subheadings for them, and place those passages beneath the subheadings. After the procedure is complete, students must defend their choice of subheadings based upon text. Teacher Note: Packets distributed to students may have some of the same passages while others may be different.
- The teacher will prepare two presentations of the same informational text so that one text has a variety of organizational aids such as headings, subheadings, glossaries, etc. while the other text will have no organizational aids. Divide the class in half. Half of the class will receive the text with organizational aids while the other half of the class will receive the text from which organizational aids have been removed. Give the entire class a series of questions that can be answered from the text. Students should read the text and then answer the questions. The teacher will time students and determine an average completion time for each half of the class. The teacher and students should review answers for accuracy. Based upon the degree of accuracy and amount of time taken to answer questions, students will determine the benefits of organizational aids. Teacher Note: This same procedure might be used with any organizational aid or text feature.
- Students will preview an informational text. The teacher will present the students with a series of topics to be explored from the text or a series of questions to be answered from the text. Among the organizational aids embedded in the text, such as titles, subtitles, transition words, etc. have students determine the best ones for locating specific information. In class discussion students will explain the reasons for their choices.
- The teacher will provide the students with a series of informational texts on the same topic and some specific purposes for their reading of those texts. Students will preview the texts based upon their focus on tables of contents in the texts. Next, relying upon tables of contents and preview of texts, students will order the texts from least to most beneficial for their reading purposes. In class discussion students should explain how the tables of contents helped them create their order. Teacher Note: This procedure might be used with small groups of students depending upon the availability of materials.

Clarification

Reading Grade 8 Indicator 2.A.2

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will be able to **identify, use, and analyze text features**. These text features are purposeful and send visual signals to the reader about the nature and use of the content. As the complexity of texts increases, these features lead readers first to make predictions about the text and later to draw conclusions from the text.

In order to gain full comprehension of a text, a reader should **use print features and analyze text features**. A reader should take note of the use of bold or italic type, font type and size, colored type, underlining, and quotation marks, which allow insight into the relative importance and organization of a text. These varied uses of print features focus a reader's attention on specific aspects of text and help a reader gauge the importance of ideas and their relationship to each other.

Effective **use and analysis of graphic aids** is necessary to comprehend informational text. When using graphic aids, a reader should be able to identify the information the aid provides and determine a purpose for its use. Photographs and illustrations with or without captions deliver a quick insight into the content of a text. Cartoons relay an author's attitude and can, with minimum text, serve as a persuasive device. Maps, graphs, diagrams, and tables deliver much information from minimal text. Combining the information a graphic provides with effective use of print features enhances a reader's comprehension of a total text. This, in turn, allows a reader to draw conclusions about the importance of the information.

Using and analyzing informational aids is a vital component in text comprehension. A preview of text helps a reader prepare for accessing information. Timelines, glossed words (words defined within the text), bulleted lists, and pronunciation keys throughout the text assist a reader in securing specialized information that will increase comprehension. Recognition of transitional words helps a reader follow a sequence of events or development of an idea, argument, or persuasion. Footnotes and works cited establish a source from which a student can judge the reliability of a text. Analyzing informational aids in combination with print and graphic aids supports the comprehension of a text.

When a reader **uses and analyzes the organizational aids** in a text, he or she focuses on a general outline of information that contributes to meaning. Tables of contents set the order in which information is presented while titles, subtitles, headings, and subheadings within a chapter or section establish a sequence or degree of importance of that information. These aids along with other standard features such as glossaries and indices help a reader develop understanding of a text.

To **use and analyze online information**, a reader needs to use and analyze online features effectively. Once a reader knows the location and use of the URL, he or she can access additional sources of information through hypertext links or drop down menus. Knowing how these features work allows a reader to maneuver through a website to read with purpose and gather information.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator is the address of the website.

Home Page

This page is the first one in a website.

Hypertext Links

Highlighted or underlined text will take a user to another website which has related information. A link to another website is indicated when the cursor moves over highlighted or underlined text and the cursor changes to a hand with a pointed finger. Left clicking the cursor allows a user to access that website.

Drop Down Menu

These menus and lists are signaled by inverted pyramids. When the inverted pyramid is clicked on, a series of other sources appears.

Sidebar

Information, such as site maps, lists, or explanations of the site, are set off in boxed text.

Locating the sponsor of a website combined with focused reading helps a reader judge the reliability of a source. Using certain elements of print, graphic, and organizational aids, a reader can make judgments about online text and construct meaning from it.

As readers have more experiences with these skills and with increasingly complex texts, their cognitive abilities will also increase. Experienced readers will be able to identify, explain, and analyze how all text features can support the main idea of a text. Readers will understand how these features contribute to and complement each other to help a reader construct meaning of an entire text.